



DESE

Missouri
DEPARTMENT OF ELEMENTARY & SECONDARY
EDUCATION

FOOD & NUTRITION SERVICES

February 21, 2023

DESE Staff Update

Welcome Theresa Dalby, Nutrition Program Specialist to our Team. Theresa will be filling the Southeast Region.

DESE Summer Workshops

We are looking for schools interested in hosting regional gatherings in summer 2023 focused around food service professional peer to peer networking and learning. Please let our team know if you are interested in hosting.

REMINDERS

Claims - Claims are to be submitted by the 15th of each month in order to be paid by the end of the month. The Authorized Representative will receive an email notification when money is deposited. Per USDA Regulations: Claims must be submitted no more than 60 days following the report month for the submission of an original claim.

Financial Reports -

The 2021-2022 FNS Financial Report is open to all LEAs and the deadline has been extended to **February 28, 2023**. (The due date was Nov. 1, 2022).

If your Financial Report does not say PENDING APPROVAL – it has NOT

National School Breakfast Week March 6-10

Missouri Breakfast Facts

- Missouri is ranked #1 in Total Breakfasts Served for the USDA Mountain Plains Region! (MO, CO, IA, KS, MT, NE, ND, SD, WY)
- Missouri is ranked #14 in Total Breakfasts Served Nationwide!
- Missouri has served **54,749,378** breakfasts so far during the 22-23 SY.

Based on data for the 22-23 SY as of February 10, 2023

National School Breakfast Week (March 6-10, 2023) is right around the corner, and it's time to start making your preparations (if you haven't already). This year's theme, "Dig in to School Breakfast," means you can get creative with construction-themed activities, decorations and menus! Don't know where to start? Check out the official "[Join the Breakfast Builders!](#)" [NSBW Toolkit](#)—now available exclusively for SNA members—for inspiration and tips that will help you construct the perfect celebration!

In the Toolkit, you'll find:

- a "blueprint for success" to help you set goals and manage logistics
- fun activities to get students engaged
- ideas for decorations and costumes
- suggestions for construction-themed breakfast menu
- social media tips
- guidelines for legislator and media outreach

[Download the Toolkit](#)

been received by us. If it says PENDING VALIDATION it has NOT been submitted.

Please complete this report prior to the deadline to insure that future food service payments are not withheld– thank you!

Proposed Updates to the School Meal Standards

February 3, USDA Food and Nutrition Service (FNS) made the proposed rule entitled “[Child Nutrition Programs: Revisions to Meal Patterns Consistent With the 2020 Dietary Guidelines for Americans](#)” publicly available on its website. The proposed rule can be found [here](#) and is scheduled to be published on the *Federal Register* public inspection website. FNS encourages all schools to [comment](#) on the proposed school meal standards rule during the 60-day comment period that begins Feb. 7, 2023.

By law, USDA is required to set standards for the foods and beverages served through the school meal programs, including nutrition standards that align with the [Dietary Guidelines for Americans](#). School nutrition professionals develop meals that fit within those standards and reflect local tastes and preferences. Research shows that these standards are effective at promoting good nutrition, and kids who eat school meals are more likely to consume nutritious foods like fruits, vegetables, and dairy products

Using this valuable feedback, FNS is proposing a [gradual, multi-year approach](#) to implementing a few important updates to the nutrition standards to



Here are a few breakfast-tastic ideas to get you started:

- Decorate your cafeteria with NSBW posters and related artwork. If the school principal allows, consider creating a mural or hanging up permanent artwork for year-round display. Focus on designs that promote nutritious food choices, particularly breakfast foods.
- Contact a local celebrity, such as an athlete, news anchor, musician, business owner or elected official to come have breakfast with students one morning. If you can't find a local celebrity, consider having the school mascot or a volunteer dressed up as a popular character from a movie or TV show.
- Invite teachers, administrators or even your school principal to stand in as guest servers for breakfast one morning.
- Offer a tasting of new breakfast menu items and talk to students about the nutritive benefits they get from certain foods, such as strong bones from the calcium in milk or energy from the complex carbs in oatmeal.

For additional School Breakfast Week flyers and products please visit <https://www.jimcolemanstore.com/snashop/>



P-EBT benefit Items due by March 13.

The first item is your LEAs student absence template completed with the free or reduced-price eligible students that had a COVID-related absence during SY 21-22. Starting on September 1, 2021 students that would have normally received a free or reduced-price meal at school had it not been due to a COVID-related school closure or COVID-related absence are eligible for P-EBT benefits. If

support healthy kids.
These include:

- Limiting added sugars in certain high-sugar products and, later, across the weekly menu;
- Allowing flavored milk in certain circumstances and with reasonable limits on added sugars;
- Incrementally reducing weekly sodium limits over many school years; and
- Emphasizing products that are primarily whole grain, with the option for occasional non-whole grain products.

A comparison chart on the proposed standards for schools can be found here: <https://www.fns.usda.gov/cn/school-meal-standards-comparison-chart>

In some of these areas, FNS proposes different options and requests input on which would best achieve the goal of improving child health while also being practical and realistic to implement.



Farm to School Funding Opportunity

Applications will be released in Summer 2023 to use towards the 23-24 and 24-25 school years. Funding is made available through the Local Food for Schools (LFS) Cooperative grant for schools to purchase local food to serve for school meals

you have not yet completed this first item please follow these steps-

1. Watch the Pandemic Electronic Benefits Transfer training video here <https://vimeo.com/780844620/1fe1a3c9aa> and review the P-EBT FAQ here at <https://dese.mo.gov/media/pdf/lets-talk-tuesday-p-ebt-faqs-sy21-22districtsschools>.
2. Next, after watching the training video you must complete the survey here <https://vimeo.com/780844620/1fe1a3c9aa> to obtain your LEA unique registration code.
3. Once you receive your LEA unique registration code and log-in steps you can download your unique LEA student absence template using the DESE P-EBT Servicenow Portal, <https://desepebtprod.servicenowservices.com/dese>.
4. Review the knowledge base how-to articles and videos within the portal and follow the instructions to upload the student absence template to the portal.

The second item is your LEAs student data for Summer 2022. **THIS IS A SEPARATE SUBMISSION.** Summer benefits are available for school children who **received free or reduce-price school meals during the month of May 2022 or the last month of the regular school year 21-22.** Because the covered summer period is an extension of the school year, this includes free or reduced-price eligible children who graduate at the end of the school year 21-22. Summer benefits are NOT tied to Summer School attendance. Paid students are NOT eligible for a summer benefit. School children who were eligible for free or reduced-price school meals under the NSLP and SBP in SY 21-22 and enrolled in school during the last month of the regular school year are eligible for P-EBT summer. If a child dropped out of school prior to the last month of the school year, that child would be ineligible for summer P-EBT benefits. If you have not yet completed this second item please follow these steps-

1. Carefully review the summer benefits information by watching the Pandemic Electronic Benefits Transfer training video here <https://vimeo.com/780844620/1fe1a3c9aa> and review the P-EBT FAQ here at <https://dese.mo.gov/media/pdf/lets-talk-tuesday-p-ebt-faqs-sy21-22districtsschools>.
2. Log-in to your Servicenow portal and download the student summer template.
3. Tip- You can copy and paste your free and reduced-price student names and information from your student absence template to your summer template and then complete remaining information.
4. Make sure you have all free and reduced-price students and information completed on the template, review and upload.

Things to pay very close attention to when completing the student absence template:

- The absent begin and end dates must be within the eligible range. Eligible absences begin and end dates can only range between September 1, 2021

through the National School Lunch Program and School Breakfast Program only.

Schools will submit an application to receive funds by providing a written project plan that details how much money the school needs to increase local purchasing and how the school plans to utilize the funds to purchase from local farmers, small businesses and prioritizing under-privileged farmers/producers.

The LFS funds can only be spent on local (with-in 400 mile radius) non-processed or minimally processed food, i.e. dehydrated food, beef, pork, eggs, honey, milk, fruits and vegetables. A portion of the funds may also be spent on the storage and distribution of the local food items.

A LFS grant roll-out webinar will be coming soon.

through the end of the SY 21-22 (June 30, 2022). For example students absences during the month of August 2021 will be cancelled. Do not submit absence dates in the month of August 2021.

- Enter the number of consecutive **school** days the student did not receive a free or reduced-price meal at school because of COVID. For example if the student absence date began on November 8th and ended on November 17th you must only count the number of school days the student was absent.
- Do not count weekend days, non-school days, weather related AMI days or holidays in the number of consecutive school days the student was absent, these absences will be cancelled. Do not add excel formulas to calculate the number of days for you.
- You must enter absence begin and end dates using the format **MM/DD/YYYY**. If you use a different format the date does not show up in the portal and may cause the case to cancel.
- REVIEW YOUR DATA AND DOUBLE CHECK PRIOR TO UPLOADING. PLEASE DOUBLE CHECK YOUR DATA FOR COMMON MISTAKES.
- Only include students that would have received a free or reduced-price meal at school had it not been for a COVID-related absence during SY 21-22 only. Paid students are not eligible for P-EBT benefits.
- Students enrolled in a CEP participating school during SY 21-22 are all free eligible under the provision.
- If your school district did NOT track COVID-related absences please carefully review the FAQ for the eligibility for schools that did not track COVID related absences prior to submitting your file.
- Call our office if you need help!

Trainings and resources are available on our website here <https://dese.mo.gov/financial-admin-services/food-nutrition-services/news-and-updates-2>. Our office notified schools about P-EBT on May 19, 2022. The most recent press release and notification can be found here <https://dese.mo.gov/media/pdf/pebt-letter-schools>

Please also share the letter to families and FAQ for parents and guardians <https://dese.mo.gov/media/pdf/p-ebt-faq-sy-2021-22-parentguardian>.

USDA Foods Update

Gold Star and Net Off Invoice (NOI) Accounts - February brings us frosty weather and hints of springtime coming. It also means we are more than halfway through the school year.

Please take a moment to review the commodity foods in your Gold Star "Live Inventory" and plan your March and April orders to receive all of the remaining brown box and Fee For Service (FFS) items you have requested on your commodity packet for this school year. All items you have processed must be delivered in this school year. Commodity items remaining in your Gold Star account will be automatically shipped to your school if you have not selected them for delivery.

FFS products become your district's property as soon as they are placed in your Gold Star "Live Inventory". Please provide timely payment for the products you have chosen to process.

Also, check your entitlement balances for any NOI pounds you have processed this year and be sure to use them by June 30th. If you need assistance with NOI pounds, please reach out to the processor's representative.

[Processor/Broker Contact Information | Missouri Department of Elementary and Secondary Education \(mo.gov\)](#)

Bonus Entitlement is still available through the end of the school year to school districts that can use additional commodities.

- Brown Box Bonus Foods – reply to February Bonus email that was sent to your district's authorized representative. Contact us at donatedfoods@dese.mo.gov for assistance.
- DOD Fresh Fruits and Vegetables Funds – email requests to donatedfoods@dese.mo.gov
- Additional FFS and NOI pounds are available – contact your processor's representative

The USDA Commodity Foods Packet is available at [USDA Foods | Missouri Department of Elementary and Secondary Education \(mo.gov\)](#).

As you complete your packet, request only the amount you have refrigeration and dry storage to accommodate monthly. Also remember that you must competitively procure any FFS or NOI products you select on the commodity packet. Review your packet to assure you have met the 10 case minimum for monthly deliveries from Gold Star. Completed packets must be returned by March 1, 2023 to donatedfoods@dese.mo.gov.

Commodity 101 and Procurement Webinars are now available on the [DESE website](#).

Frozen Fruit Products – Several instances of larvae in frozen fruit products and fruit cups have been documented this year. USDA has clarified that these do not pose a food safety concern and the products are acceptable for distribution. Please inspect these products as you utilize them and discard any you may have concern with.

NOI Survey – To better serve our school districts, we would like to get feedback on the NOI entitlement option. DESE will be sending a survey soon to gather more information.

USDA Commodity Foods Packet for SY23/24 submission timeframe has ended. If you have not submitted your packet, please reach out immediately to donatedfoods@dese.mo.gov

Net Off Invoice Survey –We need feedback on the Net Off Invoice entitlement option. A [brief survey](#) has been sent to LEA's authorized representatives. We want to hear from all districts whether or not you have done NOI processing. Surveys submission deadline is **March 15th**.



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205 Jefferson Street

Jefferson City, MO 65101

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